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OF

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE DISTRICTS

OF

MINOW, SHAMIL, AND KOW GUNOW,

During the Month of August,

1873.

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3*rd August* 1873.—After an interview with Sheikh Saggar at Kishm I left at 1-30 P.M. for the Island of Ormuz, and turning round the point, on which the old Portuguese Fortress, now in a highly dilapidated condition, is situated, our boat anchored at 4-30 P.M. close to where the nulla, holding large tablets of common salt, is. In following up its bed, we found briny water oozing out in various spots, and by its evaporation depositing large tablets of salt, varying in thickness from half an inch to one inch or more. This salt is exported to Minow, Bunder Abbass, Batna Kishm, and the neighbouring Islands. Red ochre, as well as black oxide of iron (commonly known as sand for drying ink), is also largely found in the Island.

Early in the following morning left for the creek of Minow, but as the wind was not favorable we made a slow progress, and about 1 P.M. came in sight of the two posts, fixed in the bar, one on each side of the entrance to the creek; a small country buoy is situated just opposite to the entrance, and guided by this we entered the creek at 2 P.M.; on the dry sand and marshy flats we saw a large number of red winged flamingoes, I fired a shot, but without success. Our boat moved up the creek partly under sail, and partly being pulled along by the Clasees, till we reached the head of the creek at 6 P.M.

The creek is winding and about four to five miles in length; it is said to have extended much farther inland. At the head we saw about 104 small native boats hauled up in a row on the right side of the creek: these crafts, and others not now here, have brought to Minow a host of people from the whole of the Island of Kishm, Ormuz, Lingah, Bunder Abbass, and other neighbouring ports; on an average about six or seven thousand people resort to this large date-growing district at this season of the year. We passed the night at the Custom Contractor's shed. The Contractor pays 14,000 Krans as the revenue of the port. The supply of water is scanty and very bad, and is drawn from a tank about

half a mile distant from the place of landing: the tank in its turn receives its supply from one of the terminal canals of the Minow River. Since the water in its course to the tank runs through a saline marshy soil it becomes quite brackish, and unfit for drinking and washing purposes. A chunam canal for leading water over the marshy soil, and one or two additional reservoirs close to the landing, would be a great improvement, and add vastly to the comfort and convenience of the people.

5th August 1873.—At 6 A.M. left for Dohoo, a village about 2 farsakhs distant from the head of the creek passing through a flat barren saline plain. This village has large date groves. The day was hot, temperature at 2 P.M. being 104° under shade. Ahmed Shah, the present Governor of Bunder Abbass, on receiving intelligence of my arrival invited me to his place at Regow, and I left in the evening, passing through a large patch of waste ground having only the tamarisk and kahoors growing in it, the direction of our course being north-easterly. The Governor duly received me and expressed himself highly delighted with my visit. Passed the night on the top of a large date leaf shed, which during the day forms the Governor's Court. The place was hot, being surrounded by large gardens and thick date groves. Ahmed Shah is an elderly man, aged about 62 years, but keeps a jet black painted beard, is thin and of very weakly constitution, has been rather ill from a bad sprain of the toe. Abdoollah, son of Ahmed Shah, has charge of the Minow districts. He is a thin young man, aged about 28 years, the right lower extremity has become greatly wasted and stiff after a bad rheumatic attack. Since Meer Jaffar Khan, Chief of Roodan, and brother-in-law to Ahmed Shah, died of a few days' fever at Minow, Abdoollah has been posted to the vacancy of Roodan. But some of the relatives of the deceased and the headmen of Roodan declare that there has been some foul play with the deceased, and they are consequently determined to retaliate, and not admit Abdoollah to the post. No doubt, settlement of this affair will be preceded by some disturbance and bloodshed.

Although I was much pressed by the Governor to stay with him at Regow, but as it was a hot place, I requested him to give me lodgings at the fort, which is reputed to be the coolest spot of the neighbouring villages of Minow. He very kindly vacated a large house with a high story where we took up our quarters. The place being in a promontory, and being distant from the date groves, experiences all the breezes, and has, consequently, a decided advantage over other places situated in the centre of the date groves and gardens, which, although very pleasant to look at and to take a short walk in, are inconvenient and discomfortable to live in from moist heat, want of breeze, and, worst of all, the musquitoes.

MINOW.

The district of Minow may be described to be as the tract of plain limited in the east by the Bashkard range of rocks; on the north by the ranges of rocks which separate it from Roodan and Roodbar; on the west it is washed by the sea, where it presents several small creeks; towards the north-west it is limited by Hajeeabad and Gwarbund, which mark respectively its limits towards Bunder Abbass and Shamil; on

the south the district terminates to a point near Ziarat, where the Bashkard range of rocks sends off an offshoot, which approaching the seaboard marks its limit in this direction. The whole of this plain has different degrees of richness and fertility of soil according to site. As one approaches the ranges of rocks, the soil formed by the disintegration of the rocks grows rich and richer, as indicated by the vigorously growing date trees and fruit gardens, and, as one recedes from them towards the sea, the vegetation is less luxuriant, the waste patches of ground bearing nothing but tamarisk, camel-thorn, "rahons" and stunted mimosa increase in number, until one reaches the seaboard, where the soil becomes perfectly saline and marshy with only the mangrove growing in it. The thick belt of date and fruit trees about a farsakh in breadth, and seven or eight farsakhs in length, is situated in the plain close to the ranges of rocks described above, and may be said to run in a curved direction. This thick belt extends from Hajeeabad and Doomshabar across the bed of Minow river to Bauzar in the south, beyond which the date groves are thin and sparse. This may be owing partly to a marshy nature of the soil, as the ranges of rocks approach the sea-side, but chiefly because the river does not irrigate beyond this limit.

Gardens.

There are about 94,000 timars* of date trees in the district of Minow, each paying a tax at 1¼ Kran. The fruit gardens of Minow are many, but there are only a few of them of note, among the latter may be mentioned Noorabad and Farhabad. Noorabad belongs to Ahmed Shah, who has taken particular care, and adopted a particular system, in planting the trees in regular alternate rows, with wide walks between, which are kept scrupulously clean; there is a large central shed of date leaves for the visitors to rest under. The principal fruits of Minow, leaving aside the dates, are mangoes, guavas, sweet and sour limes, citrons, jambools, figs, grapes, plantains, mulberries, garumgungee or louz (wild almond). There is a solitary cocoa-nut palm at Regow, but it is dwarfish looking. An attempt was made to grow the orange tree, but it was a failure.

These fruit gardens are generally made over to the highest bidder every year, and they form thus a source of revenue to the owners. Henna,

* The term "timar" is rather ambiguous; it does not signify a particular number of trees, but it is a relative term, intended to represent a group of date trees of a particular fertility, so that in a rich soil two or more trees may constitute a "timar" yielding a certain quantity of dates, while in a less favored spot 8 or 10 date trees would be required to constitute a "timar," yielding the same quantity of dates, so that the term has reference to the date producing capacity of the trees, rather than to their number, and a "timar" may consequently be made up of one or two trees, or ten or more. This is a very old system; each spot of ground had its particular number of "timars," and the taxes were accordingly paid by each owner. Even now, although the old "timars" are not existing in most places, the holders of the lands are obliged to pay the original taxes; while those who have grown fresh date trees do not pay anything more than a certain sum for the supply of water. Since the system of "timars" was first instituted, there is no doubt that date plantations have very largely grown, and should a fresh examination be made, a very large number of "timars" will be added yielding an increased income to the Persian Government. It will have also the effect of doing justice to the present occupiers of land, some of whom have to pay more and others less than what they should do.

tobacco, and indigo plants are very largely grown in the districts of Minow, and form one of the principal articles of export. Henna, once planted, yields crops of leaves for ten or fifteen years; but the indigo plant does not last for more than two or three years. Wheat, barley, "coonjid" seed (yielding sweet oil), and "zorrat" (sorghum) are largely grown, especially during the rains. In some parts of Minow hollow reed and a coarse grass grow plentifully; of the grass, mats are made, some being of a fine quality.

Minow Fort.

The fort is situated in a commanding position on the crest of the last spur of a range of sedimentary (earthy) rocks. It has four principal gates, and several towers. Hazara, the highest of the towers, yields a commanding view of the plain below. The fort is now in a ruinous state; it was kept in a good condition during the Arab rule. Within its walls is the Governor's residence.

Minow River.

The river enters the plain in a north-eastern direction, and is immediately diverted in various directions, along several large canals, for the supply of the date plantations and fruit-trees, &c., so that very little of its water runs in its original bed, which, as the river winds round the low promontory on which the town is situated, widens to about a mile in breadth. At this season of the year there is very little water in its bed; close to the fort it is very shallow varying from a half to three feet or more. The bed is sandy and full of pebbles and large rounded stones. During the rains the water covers the whole bed, rendering it quite unfordable; very often after heavy rains it floods even the town. There is a large formation of fine sand mixed with conglomerate rocks, running paralelly with, but isolated from, the main range of rocks, bounding Minow northerly by a narrow ravine through which the main canal for the supply of Shahwar and other villages in a north-westerly and westerly direction. This isolated formation is purely of a fluviatile origin, not a single shell being detected in it; it would lead one to infer that either the river was large in ages gone by, and that from some cause or other it became reduced to its present magnitude, at the same time that from subterranean action this sand and conglomerate formation was turned out of its bed; or that while the river retained its original magnitude, this formation, while it was slowly being formed and elevated, has diverted its course from a north-westerly to a south-westerly direction, in which it now flows, emptying itself into the sea at some distance below the Minow creek. It is needless to remark that the whole life and luxuriance of Minow depend upon the waters of this river, and that from any cause, natural or artificial (as was recently threatened to be done by the Roodances), should the river be diverted to elsewhere in the plateau beyond, the whole will run to ruin.

Villages.

The so-called villages of Minow are numerous, since any two or more huts with a few inmates in a locality here are quite sufficient to entitle the locality to receive the name village. But the principal villages may be from

40 to 50 in number. About seven villages are purely inhabited by the Beloochees, who are said to have migrated to these parts about 200 years ago: these intermarry with their sect only.

The Town.

The town of Minow is situated close to the fort, on the low promontory at its foot. There may be about 800 to 1,000 mud and brick (sun-dried) walled houses and huts, with 3 to 4 thousand inhabitants. It has a fine large bath, erected by the present Governor, and has a small bazar with a few stalls and sheds. But on Thursdays a grand bazar is held on the open ground, close to the fort. These are the grand days for a general purchase and sale, since five or six thousand people collect at this spot, and they come from the neighbouring as well as from the distant villages and districts (Roodan, Roodbar, Shamil, &c.). This motley gathering begins to form as the people pour in from all directions even before the break of day till about 10 A.M., and the whole affair is over by about 2 or 3 P.M. One can hardly go through this gathering and come out with clean clothes, except he has several "Furrashes" to go before him.

Productions.

The principal productions and articles of export of the Minow district are dates, wheat, barley, tobacco, henna, indigo, "coonjid" seed, zorrat, myrtle leaves, wool, and ghee (from Roodbar and Roodan), date leaf tatties, date rafters, mats, fans, earthen pots, reed pipes, &c., &c. Large quantities of lime juice in carboys are exported to various places.

Natives of Minow.

The natives of Minow designate themselves Minowees, and from their peculiar dialect and provincialism they can be at once recognized as belonging to Minow. Both the males and females cannot be said, as a rule, to have any claim to beauty, as ordinarily understood; they are generally coarse featured, with thick lips, large noses, low foreheads, but seem to be peaceful and industrious; the mats, fans, &c., being principally manufactured by the females.

Disease.

The prevailing diseases are fevers, eye affections* of almost every description, malarious and neuralgic headaches, enlarged spleens, bowel affections, and rheumatic complaints. Some time it is visited by variola, and in 1871 about this time a severe epidemic of cholera caused a heavy mortality.

Climate.

The climate of Minow on the whole may be said to be unhealthy and malarious from a large supply of water and a thick vegetation. During summer the weather is hot and moist, the prevailing winds during the days of my sojourn were from south-east. The average temperature as taken from observations in four different days, between the 7th and 15th August, at the fort, was as follows:—

Temperature at 6 A.M.	89·25°.
Do. at 2 P.M.	101·50°.
Do. at 6 P.M.	94·75°.

* About a year ago a severe epidemic of purulent ophthalmia rendered many adults and children perfectly blind.

The highest temperature at 2 P.M. being 104° Fahrenheit.

There are two water-mills in Minow; they can grind within 24 hours from 50 to 60 maunds (of 9lbs.) of wheat, and a smaller quantity of barley. Some parts of Minow are infested by wild boars, jackals, hyenas, and wolves, which often steal infants and young children from their cradles, and even from their mothers' arms, and devour them, so that the people are required to take great care of their children during night time.

On the evening of the 15th, I bade good bye to Ahmed Shah at Regow, and left at 5 P.M. for Shamil. It must be stated that during the rest of my journey I travelled in the evenings after 4 o'clock, and by moonlight early in the mornings, before the sun was hot to any extent. Indeed, during the day the heat was insupportable, and frequent cold water baths were the only means of relieving the feeling of heat and oppression. As I had to go over nine farsakhs before reaching Shamil, I deemed it advisable to clear the distance during the night, our course tended in a northern direction being slightly inclined to the west. Going through Shahwar, and along a path having on each side large fields for wheat, barley, henna, "coonjid" seed, tobacco, and several large fields of tall and green "zorrat," we passed the small village of Nowbund, and going through a jungle of "kahoors" reached Doomshabar at 7 P.M. It is the last village in this direction, which is supplied by the Minow river during the hot season. It has a few date groves, but hollow reed grows plentifully. We then moved on passing through a thick jungle of kahoors, kharg (*calotropis gigantia*), tamarisk, babools and other acacia, and crossing the dry beds of several nullas, which brawl with water during the rains, reached the fort of Gwarbund at 10 P.M., supped and stayed here till moon rise.

GWARBUND.

The village is large and has about 500 inhabitants. It musters about 250 musketeers. The fort is large, with tall mud walls, and has a large fresh water well. During the times of danger the people shut themselves up in the fort and bid defiance to the invaders. It is situated almost midway between the forts of Shamil and Minow. The fort is notorious for fleas and musquitoes, owing to this and a hot night, during the few hours we sojourned here, we could not sleep. At 1 A.M. again moved in through a similar ground, as last noted, and reached Chah-Kharg at 4 A.M.

CHAH-KHARG.

This is a small village with a few date groves and huts, and it marks the commencement of the district of Shamil in this side. Had here an hour's breathing time, and then moved on for Shamil, which we reached at 7 A.M. after having crossed a small stream of water.

SHAMIL.

Shamil is the principal village of the district known as Shamilat, which has several small villages* included under it. It is subject to Bunder Abbass. Goolam Ali Hyder, its present Deputy Governor, resides

* Chah-Kharg, Hassan Lingai, Shamil, Cooshkoo, Takht, Calcaji, Surdurra, Ziarat, Gowdoo.

here. He is an elderly man (58 years), of a strong make, active, with free manners, and very conversational. We were accommodated under a date leaf shed; and every possible attention was shown to us. The day was hot, 102° at 2 P.M. The whole of the district of Shamil lies along the foot of the range of rocks, which runs in a north-western direction, and is continuous with the range which limits northerly the district of Minow. This range separates Shamilat from the plateau of Roodan. Shamilat has about 25,000 of timars of date trees paying an annual revenue at 1¼ Kran each. Its principal productions are dates, tobacco, henna, wheat, barley, and "zorrat" for home consumption. There are about five passages leading from Shamilat to Roodan along the narrow ravines of rocks which are kept strongly guarded to prevent cattle-lifting and other highway robberies by the Roodanees, &c. The whole population of Shamilat compared to that of Minow is small; it may amount to 4 or 5 thousand. The village of Shamil contains about 200 houses and huts, has a scant date plantation, with a few mango, wild almond, and lemon trees, all being watered by a small stream which emerges into the plain at the foot of the fort of Shamil.

Fort of Shamil.

The fort crests an isolated rock of fluviatile formation consisting of sand, gravel, pebbles, and round stones in strata which are almost inclined perpendicularly to the plain of stratification. The sides all round are steep and inaccessible, except on the south-east, where it has a gate. The rock may be about 200 feet high, and affords a good bird-eye view of the plain below; in a clear weather the fortress at Ormuz is said to be distinctly seen. This rock is crescentically surrounded, leaving its side towards the plain free, by a huge but low mass of a similar sandstone rocks, being as it were crumpled up together confusedly. The small stream may be seen winding round along a deep ravine of this mass of rocks from the north-west, and running by the foot of the fort entering the plain. The body of the rock inside the fort is excavated in numerous places for storing provisions and other stores. There are two very deep wells of fresh water inside the fort.

KOH NYUNG

17th August.—We left Shamil by moonlight at 2 A.M. Goolam Ali Hyder kindly accompanied us; and he started in a northern direction for Koh Nyung, the highest peak of the range of rocks bounding the Shamilat. We passed for the greater part over a ground covered with large rounded stones, being beds of large winter torrents; and crossed two streamlets of water, which have no connection with each other. From the general appearance and extent of the beds it is quite plain that during the rains these districts become quite impassible from heavy and rapid mountain torrents. Reached the foot of Koh Nyung after a ride of an hour and a half; slept here till daylight in the bed of a winter torrent, which is also the caravan path winding round the foot of Koh Nyung and leading from Bunder Abbass and Shamil to Kerman, Yezd, and districts beyond. Directly at the foot of the rock in a sloping ground is a small strip of date plantation, with a few huts and inhabitants. There is a fair stream of fresh water, which comes rolling and murmuring down a deep ravine;

on the side of the rock it is subdivided into several streamlets which work about six miles here. After irrigating this strip of date trees the water runs down a canal, watering in its course fields of tobacco and henna and date trees for more than a farsakh to Cooshkoo, a small village, our next place of halt for the day. The rock in this side is very steep, with deep ravines furrowing it, and presents gigantic masses of dark stone. It is said to be easily accessible from the northern side, and is said to have a very cold climate, a good deal of fruit trees and other vegetation; large supply of fresh water, and plenty of game in shape of deer, sambar, leopard, black bear, and wild boar. After a ride of an hour and a half over a strong ground passing at intervals by the henna fields and oleander (*nerium odorum*) growing wild, we alighted under a large jambool tree situated in the centre of a date grove at Cooshkoo.

COOSHKOO.

The supply of water is from the stream coming from Koh Nyung. A hot day 103° at 2 P.M. In last year this village was destroyed by several shocks of earthquake; about 17 deaths resulted, the rest of the people being out at the time. The ground in the vicinity of the adjoining rock was split open, and a stream of fetid dark fluid escaped from it. The adjoining rock was also observed to have become heated, and it evolved large volumes of smoke for about 20 hours.

TAKHT.

Left for Takht at 5 P.M., and reached it at 7 P.M. The path was, generally speaking, good and plain, being free from loose stones and beds of nullas, so that one can gallop away over its greater part. As we were half a farsakh from Takht we saw a large marshy plain in our left, overgrown with tall coarse grass and hollow reed; the plain is said to be infested by the hyena and the wild boar. Takht is the largest village of Shamilat; it has a considerable date plantation; there may be about six or seven hundred brick (sun-dried) and mud-walled houses, including huts; the population amounting to two or three thousand. The supply of water is from wells, two of which are quite fresh. We sojourned here for the night over the top of a house; it was cool and agreeable, and we enjoyed a good sleep.

KALKAZI.

18*th August.*—Left at 5 A.M. for Kalkazi, reaching it at 7-30 A.M. The distance may be about two farsakhs. The ground passed over was bad being covered with large loose stones, through which the horses had the greatest difficulty in going; also crossed a large nulla full of large stones, and crossed a streamlet going into the plain in our left where a considerable date plantation lay. The path going by these plantations of Gowdoo and Ziarat is said to be quite plain and smooth; but the present one was chosen to make a short cut, so as to avoid the heat of the rising sun. Numerous oleanders grow by this stream. We passed the day under a date leaf shed; the day was hot, 108° at 2 P.M. with a hot dry north-westerly wind blowing. The supply of water is from wells, most of which are fresh. After taking leave of Golam Ali Hyder, who showed his great regret at parting, and thanking him for the trouble he had undergone, we left for Surkham at 4 P.M.

Our course lay principally in a western direction, the ground being bad and rocky, and crossed by several large nullas full of large loose rounded stones. A little before sunset we came upon the brink of a deep and wide (¼ mile?) nulla, with a small stream of brackish water running in the centre of its bed. It is commonly known as "Khar Shoor." This is the largest nulla I saw in the districts of Shamil and Minow. It serves to mark the limits of Shamil on the west. The nulla yields passage to a large body of water which comes down the Kow Gunow during the rains, and is said to open in the sea-side at Gooldan, a little below Bunder Abbass. As we got down and rode over its bed, crossing the brackish stream of water, we came up to a small group of date trees with a well of fresh water, situated towards the Surkhoon side of the nulla. This date grove is known as Sahloo, and very often this nulla goes after that name. By the time we crossed the nulla and got up the rising ground it was sunset; proceeding a little farther, we came in sight of the date groves of Surkhoon, and in the distance a large growth of tall tamarisk lay in our right. We then crossed two large dry nullas with sandy beds, and reached Surkhoon at 7 P.M.

SURKHOON.

Sojourned here during the night and the following day; the night was cool and agreeable, 84° at 7 P.M. But the day was unusually hot, with a hot dry wind blowing from south-west, the temperature at 2 P.M. being 110°. This village is one of those* which lie on the plain between Bunder Abbass and Kow Gunow, being all subject to Bunder Abbass. The principal water supply is from wells which are fresh. This village is about two farsakhs from Bunder Abbass. It has also a small spring of water which supplies a portion of the plantation. Left at 5 P.M. for Kow Gunow, and reached the village of Gunow at about 9 P.M.; our course trended in a north-north-west direction. From a distance Kow Gunow appears very much like a huge elephant squatted on the ground, its head with its trunk lying depressed and extended on the ground in a south-west direction, and its hind part to west-east. Its estimated height is about 1,690 feet above the level of the sea. We rode on over an uneven and gradually rising ground, being more or less stony, and channelled by one or more deep nullas, which serve to drain Kow Gunow. About sunset we struck upon the caravan route which leads from Bunder Abbass to Rizwoon, Surgeh, Subâ, Foork, and Tarom, as well as to Darab, Fasâh, and Shiraz. Close by the path on the left is a water reservoir, which appears to be rarely cleaned. We proceeded for about an hour along this route, and struck to the left, along a narrow path leading over the lowest spurs of the Kow. It was now quite dark and we had to proceed cautiously along a narrow path, winding over the sides and brows of the rock, with deep ravines gaping below, and presenting now and then thorny shrubs on our right. The path in some places was covered with large loose stones, and we had to go down long deep inclines, and to go up similar ascents; so that, to avoid any accidents in a dark night, we

* Surkhoon, Oormouda, Yeseen, Tazioon, Kalat Kisbar, Khoorgoo, Ginow and Doozak, Khoon-Soorkh, Gatchin, Pohol, Khamir, Sooroo, Nahand, Nakh-Nakhoda, Baghoo, Nung.

had to go on foot. At last we reached the bottom of the valley between high rocks, and shortly after came up to the hot spring of sulphureous water which flows down the ravine in a ceaseless murmur, giving one the idea that the paddles of a steamer were working. As the passage was rough and uneven, presenting often sharp reefy ledges of rock, the headman of the village of Ginow, on receiving intelligence of our approach, sent out about a number of men, with lighted date leaves in both the hands, to show us the path. Shortly after reached a small date grove, where we encamped for the night and the following day.

The hot spring had formed a pretty large pool of water from three to four feet deep, the water wells up with some force at its central part; it evolves a strong odour of sulphureted hydrogen (H.S.) and darkens silver; and also it holds a small quantity of common salt, which is seen deposited on pointed bodies. There are the ruins of a large building, a few arches of which are still standing; also some ruins of houses, and one or two water reservoirs, which all seem to be of a very old standing, and they indicate that the place was very greatly resorted to by sick men. To what nations these ruins belong it is rather difficult to say. Perhaps they belong to the Portuguese. Three water-mills were worked by this spring before, but now only one is in working order. Directly opposite to this spring is a smaller spring of brackish water which comes out of the side of the rock. The people here are quite used to drink this water. We had our supply from a reservoir about a farsakh distant, and situated by the caravan route above noted, which winds round the northern spurs of the Kow. Both these springs mingle together as they flow out of the ravine in the northern side of the valley, and are utilized for the irrigation of a large date plantation (three to four thousand trees) on the table-land beyond this valley. It appears that the small stream of brackish water noted above as running along the deep nulla of Sahloo (also known as "Khor Shoor") which limits the districts of Shamil, is derived from these springs.

GUNOW.

Gunow,* a small village which gives name to the rock, consists of a few huts with 40 to 50 inhabitants. They are thin and slender, and are very active in going over these steep rocks. As a rule they are jealous and suspicious as regards the intentions of outside visitors, and often, I am told, when much pressed upon, lead them over difficult paths so as to cause them to abandon the idea of visiting the top of the rock again. Fortunately, in my case, it was different: strict orders were previously sent by Ahmed Shah to Ali Sabz Ali, the man in charge of Kow Gunow, to attend on us, and lead us to the gardens by the easiest paths. Kow Gunow is subject to Bunder Abbass, but about 60 years ago it was included under Lar. Sheep, goats, fowls, and milk are only obtainable, other provisions must be obtained from Bunder Abbass.

Temperature at 6 A.M. 88°.
„ at 2 P.M. 99°,

and the wind blowing from the south-west. As the path for the next stages to the gardens was bad and impracticable for the horses, and even

* Gunow is the corrupted union of two Persian words "Gunda" and "Aab," *i.e.*, fetid water, so designated from the sulphureous spring existing here.

for the donkeys of the plain, we were advised to send our horses back in the plain to Yeseen to wait our arrival. We took fresh donkeys from this village as being especially adapted for travelling through these rocky regions. I took a light baggage, two Arab musketeers of the number that was kindly sent by Nasar, a British subject, who has contracted the custom revenue of Bunder Abbass, to attend on me, and four Native musketeers to serve us as guides, and to keep watch during the nights against leopards and bears, which are said to infest the jungles and ravines of Kow Gunow. 5 P.M. left by the ravine emerging on the table-land, towards the north of the valley, with its vast date groves. The path was bad and stony, and often we had to cross several steep nullas, going closely along their steep brinks, every moment fearing that the donkey would come to grief. But I was astonished to find them very firm and sure-footed. There can be no doubt that the horses would have come to certain grief in their very first attempts to go over such steep and narrow paths, with gaping nullas below. Our path lay by the northern spurs of the rock, being separated by a deep and wide ravine full of stones. A portion of the way was so steep that I preferred going on foot to riding. Indeed I was told that a few years ago a Persian merchant took one horse to the gardens, several men pushing and tugging it along with greatest difficulty over the steep passages, but the poor horse died there soon after of the effects of bruises and falls and a general exhaustion. The main rock in this direction presents rounded bulging sides, marked vertically at various intervals by groves made by rain water-courses. By sunset we descended on the bed of the ravine, having steep and high rocks on either side. The bed is covered with large loose rounded stones, and in some parts huge detached pieces of rocks are lying about. This ravine may be said to be the main drain of the valley, on the sides and slopes of which at various heights the fruit gardens are situated. During the rains this ravine yields no passage to the gardens. It is probable that "Khor Soor" is but a continuation of this ravine, receiving in its course the spring waters of Gunow and other tributary nullas of lesser magnitude. As the night was dark, and the bed of the ravine full of stones, we moved on along its windings with difficulty, and had to keep together, and be on the alert, as the place was reputed to be the resort of leopards and bears. We ought to have started an hour earlier, so as to reach the narrow entrance of the upper valley before dark. Reached the entrance of the valley by 8-30 P.M. and encamped for the night on the pebbly bed. It is always advisable to carry several leatherbags of water in ascending to the gardens, as none can be procurable on the way during the hot season.

Next morning we started for the gardens, and getting into the narrow mouth of the ravine began to ascend gradually the slope of the valley full of loose stones and large rounded masses of rock, some of which being pure limestone. Riding was out of the question, since the poor donkeys in most places had to be shoved on over large stones. The natives say that after heavy rains the stones become so much displaced that the passage at several spots is turned into steep falls and ascents, which are required to be properly filled up, so as to render them practicable for men and donkeys.

Indeed the ascent was very tiresome, especially to the big and burly, who had often to sit down and take a breathing before making a fresh start. There are numerous small trees of "badam talkhoo," yielding pure drops of a transparent gummy exudation, and "kusoo-dung," which has edible fruit growing in bunches. It is small, of the size of pepper, with a thin rind, covering a thinner bivalved shell which holds an oily kernel. When unripe the fruit is red, but is green when ripe, has a bland oily taste. It is picked and dried and eaten as such. After a couple of hours' difficult trudge up the valley reached the foot of the garden, where a few date trees are, and here ascending a steep flat incline (25°) of pure limestone (almost marble-like in hardness) rock about 40 yards high, which yields passage to a large body of water during the rains, we turned to the right, and skirting the upper border of the garden along a narrow path came to a shed of date leaves, and sojourned here for the day and the following night. This garden is called Poosh-Tung; it is large, and contains about 1,500 fruit trees, the principal being oranges, pomegranates, sweet limes, citrons, grapes, figs. At this time only the pomegranate we could get, while the oranges were yet raw and quite small, and the grapes were disposed off ever while half ripe. This is simply because the owners of these trees being in [illegible] and straitened condition, they hurry the sale of their fruit, so as to procure some money. The gardens are not owned by any one person, but each tree or group of trees has its separate owner or owners, in partnership. The owners are natives of Kow Gunow, and reside at Gunow and Doozak, the two villages at the foot of the Koh. These gardens being situated on the sloping sides of the valley, only small strips of flat ground, like so many series of steps are available for growing the trees on, which are very densely and confusedly planted for want of space, and they do not afford any room for a walk. The flat strips of ground are thus made against the sloping sides of the valley, at first a low stone wall is erected against the slope, and the hollow thus enclosed is filled up with earth and manure, and the trees are planted thereon.

Poosh-Tung.

This garden is irrigated by a fine stream of water which comes murmuring down the valley. There are no natives living here excepting the gardener with his little family. No provision of any kind are obtainable. It was fine and cold as compared to what we suffered in the plain.

Temperature at 7 A.M., 78°.
" " 2 P.M., 86°.
" " 6 P.M., 82°.

It was our intention to have moved in to the next garden, called Kahnoo, in the evening, but since about 4 P.M. heavy clouds came rolling from the north-east with a strong gust of wind, accompanied by lightning, thunder, and a light shower of rain, we postponed our march till next morning. This storm was most severely felt at Bassidore, where it rained heavily with lightning and thunder, the wind being so furious and strong as to uproot and throw down numerous date and other trees. The evening was pleasantly cold, and during the night we had to cover ourselves with the blanket.

22nd August.—Early in the morning I was first to espy the brilliant soheil (Argus) glittering in the south, which at once marks the approach of the pleasant cold weather.

KAHNOO.

We started for the next garden called Kahnoo at 5 A.M., walking up a huge steep mound, and getting down its other side, and crossing a narrow nulla reached the garden after an hour's walk. There are about 1,000 fruit trees, consisting of quinces, pomegranates, plooms (aloo bokhara), apples, grapes, and figs, a few walnut and almond trees. About this time grapes, pomegranates, fine large quinces, and luscious "aloos" were in season. The fruit is carried in small loads to Bunder Abbass for sale. This garden is more roomy, and the step-like flat strips of ground on which the trees grow are larger and wider, and afford a sufficient space for a walk, even then the trees are very closely planted. There is a pretty good space at the upper part of the garden, where the gardener's shed is, under a gytoon (olive?) tree; it may afford sufficient room for pitching 2 or 3 tents or erecting a similar number of sheds, but a little labour can turn out a great deal more space than exists now. We met two merchants of Bunder Abbass who came to pass the hot weather here. No natives live here except the gardener and his wife. No provisions are procurable. There is a fine stream of cold water (the temperature at 2 P.M. being 72°), so that one can hardly venture to bathe sitting directly under its spray. There are four large chunan tanks in connection with this garden, and they can be filled by this stream; they seem to be of a very old standing. The natives are in the habit of grafting almond in "badam talkhoo," which grows everywhere quite wild, and is often cut down for making charcoal. There is a large coniferous tree called the "awars" by the natives. These are said to grow in abundance on the top of the rock; they yield good timber for the masts of small boats. These gardens are often visited by the bears in quest of plums and other fruits. It was fine and cool here during the day.

Temperature at 6 A.M. being 77°.
Do. at 2 P.M. „ 88°.
Do. at 6 „ „ 82°.

We passed a very cold night, covering ourselves with blankets, and the natives lighted a fire and sat round it, both to drive off cold and keep the prowling beasts away. The natives declare that in some parts of the rock there are spots which indicate that smelting furnaces existed, and that now the refuse of the working of some of the ores of metals (copper, iron, or lead) are lying about. Fragments of sulphur are also detected in some parts, while common salt is deposited from a briny spring at the foot of a rock towards its northern spurs.

23rd August.—We started at 6 A.M., going partly on foot and partly riding the donkeys, and winding along the easy and steep declivities and acclivities came up to a flat spot being the neck joining two high peaks of rocks on each side; it has a fair temporary halting ground, affords a fine view of the plain, with its winding nullas, villages, and date groves, below. As a thick haze prevailed we could not see Bunder Abbass

and the sea. In descending this slope to the next garden facing the plain we partly rode and partly walked till 8-30 A.M. when we reached the garden called Kashoon.

Alighted here under a large zaytoon tree (olive). There is more open space available here for pitching tents or erecting sheds; the garden is situated in a hollow; it is small and contains about 150 trees; there are about 80 date trees; the supply of water is very scanty and at times uncertain, it trickles out of the rock and collects in a small broken tank, whence it is served out to the garden; it is rather stinking and dirty looking. Intervening between Kashoon and the high rocks in the right is a deep ravine, which drains the rocks in this side.

Temperature at 8-30 A.M., 80°.

Do. at 2 P.M., 94°.

There are no natives living here except the gardener and his family. There are a few sheep and goats in charge of the gardener, who acts also the shepherd. No supplies of any kind can be procured.

3-30 P.M. left Kashoon; and rode on for about an hour along the brow of the rock, with the deep ravine to our right, till we came to the verge of the rock, overlooking the valley, in the course of an hour. As the descent was very steep and the path stony and [illegible] sharp zigzag curves and bends, we were advised to effect the descent by the aid of stout sticks in our hand so as to avoid slipping or making false steps over the loose stones. In another hour we reached the valley below, I believe to ascend the rock in this side will be the most difficult and tiresome task, and would require at least three hours to do so. We then rode on for half an hour along the stony bed of the ravine reaching Doozak at 5 P.M.

DOOZAK.

Doozak is a small village at the foot of Kow Gunow, situated on a sloping ground and limited on the sides, except towards the rock, by the stony beds of the large water-courses which drain the deep ravines and rocks on each side. There may be about 1,000 date trees, and about 300 fruit trees, being principally oranges, pomegranates, and sour limes; a few mango and jambool trees. The supply of water is large and good from a fair sized mountain stream. Indigo plants and henna are also grown here to a small extent. The headman of Kow Gunow declares that the passes leading up to the gardens can be very easily guarded by a few natives against a host of men, as once he had occasion to do. The natives still remember and call to mind with gratitude the good old days of the Arab rule when they lived in peace and plenty, and were not so much pressed for money as now.

Temperature at 6 P.M., 96°.

Ditto „ 6 A.M., 89°.

Preferred sleeping out in the bed of the nulla to sleeping under a shed in the date groves. There is said to be an easier path leading from Doozak to Kashoon along the whole course of which one can ride. It is commonly known as "rah Suaroon." There is also a passage leading from Doozak through the ravines to the village of Gunow described above.

24th August.

Left Doozak after breakfast at 7 A.M., crossed the bed of the nulla and ascended the lowest spurs of the Kow, which lie southerly to the village, separating and concealing it from the plain beyond. We then rode down a gradually sloping ground, limited on each side by deep ravines and nullas, till we got into the plain. Here crossed a small chunam canal (supported across a water-course on low arches) which flowed with a fine stream of fresh water to some date groves in the neighbourhood of Yeseen.

YESEEN.

Reached Yeseen at 9 A.M. It has an extensive date plantation. The water supply is from large wells, which are fresh. There is a small garden that was first planted by Sheik Saeed, the former Arab Deputy-Governor of Bunder Abbass. The principal fruit trees, leaving the dates, are those of oranges, sour and sweet limes, citrons and grapes, a solitary custard apple tree. The water supply is from a large fresh water well, worked by two bullocks. There are three large bathing tanks; also ruins of a bath and large buildings, which were in connection with the garden. It was very hot here, temperature at 2 P.M. being 105° in shade. Here we saw our horses and took leave of the donkeys. At 4-30 P.M. left for Bunder Abbass, and to make a short cut we took up the path across the rock of a fine sand formation which intervenes between the plain and Bunder Abbass. There is a plain path leading to Bunder Abbass *viâ* Oormooda and Naband. The rock appears to have undergone a lateral pressure, and to present easy foldings of a short length. The rock is grooved into narrow paths by men and beasts going over it, but principally from the effects of rain water. After dark it is not advisable to ride across this rock, especially when the horse is concerned, because the rocks are slippery, and the groves very often are so narrow as not to admit the horses' hoofs. About half way up there is a water reservior. On the side towards Bunder Abbass, where the rock gradually slopes off, there is another water reservior with the dome of a ziarat dedicated to Hazrat Ali. We reached Bunder Abbass at 8 P.M. Although we were comfortably accommodated for the short time I stayed at Bunder Abbass in the late Hajee Ahmed Khan's big house it was dreadfully hot. As the sea was very rough, and there was a great surf at Bunder Abbass, I rode over to the Sooroe Bunder, and there getting into the boat crossed over to Kishm and returned by land to Bassadore. The distance between Bunder Abbass and Doozak may be about 15 miles.

I believe the easiest and best path to Kow Gunow and its gardens and villages from Bunder Abbass would be to go *viâ* Naband and Oormooda to Doozak, thence by "Rah-Suaroon" to Kashoon, beyond which the horses cannot go; from Kashoon to the gardens, Kahioo and Poosh-Tung, and easily going down along the windings of the main ravine, to the village of Gunow with its hot spring, thence *viâ* Surkhoon to return to Bunder Abbass.

BASSIDORE,
13*th October* 1873.

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Exd.—J. T. F.